

Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) Regional Vendor Distribution Pilot

The USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is considering a pilot of a Regional Vendor Distribution Model in FDPIR.

Under the current model, USDA buys food for the FDPIR food package. The distribution of the food to participating Indian Tribal Organizations (ITOs) and State agencies administering FDPIR is performed by two USDA-contracted warehouses. This model is known as the National Warehouse Model. Under the pilot, USDA would contract with a regional vendor or vendors to supply food to some FDPIR programs. The vendor(s) would buy FDPIR-approved foods and distribute them directly to ITOs and/or State agencies administering the program.

USDA FNS anticipates that the Regional Vendor Model would (1) provide fresher products for participants; (2) potentially allow for greater opportunity to buy traditional and/or local foods from Native American producers; and (3) potentially reduce overall storage and transportation costs which are attributed to the National Warehouse Model. USDA envisions that the pilot would be available in a limited geographic area or areas, and that a limited number of programs would participate. The remaining FDPIR programs would continue to be served by the National Warehouse Model while the pilot is underway.

On the November 2, 2011 conference call, USDA FNS will discuss Regional Vendor Distribution Pilot consultation sessions already conducted, actions taken, and next steps.